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Governor Doyle Announces Federal Loans Approved for Tornado Disaster Victims

27 Tornadoes Hit Southern Wisconsin on August 18, 2005

MADISON – Governor Doyle today announced that the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved a request for federal low-interest disaster loans for individuals and businesses impacted by the devastating August 18, 2005 tornadoes that hit Wisconsin.

"While I am really disappointed that FEMA has not stepped forward to help the hardworking people of this state who were devastated by these tornadoes, I commend SBA for their offer of assistance," Governor Doyle said. "This assistance will be vital as people go about rebuilding their homes, businesses, and lives."

SBA offers loans of up to \$200,000 to cover repairs to disaster-damaged homes. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to replace personal property. Low-interest loans are also available to businesses that sustained damage from the storms as well as economic loss.

The worst tornado outbreak in Wisconsin's recorded history took place on August 18, 2005, with 27 tornadoes hitting southern Wisconsin. One person was killed and over 20 people were injured. The hardest hit areas were Dane, Richland and Vernon Counties. An F3 tornado touched down in Dane County causing a 17 mile long and ½ mile wide path of destruction, and an F2 tornado hit the village of Viola. More than 400 homes were damaged and 67 were destroyed by the tornadoes.

On August 25, Governor Doyle formally requested federal disaster aid for the three affected counties. The request was denied along with the subsequent appeal.

In the SBA declaration, individuals and businesses that sustained tornado damage in the below counties are eligible to apply for assistance:

Primary Counties: Dane and Richland

Contiguous Counties: Columbia, Crawford, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Rock, Sauk and Vernon.

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Those interested in applying should contact the SBA at 1-800 659-2955 or <http://www.sba.gov/disaster>. In addition, the SBA will open temporary disaster loan assistance offices next week at the following locations:

Stoughton Area Senior Center
248 W. Main
Stoughton, WI

The center will begin operations at noon on Tuesday, January 10. Normal business hours will then be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. until further notice

Viola Community Building
118 W. Commercial Street
Highway 56
Viola, WI

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The National Weather Service reported this fall that total damage from the tornadoes on August 18 was over \$43 million. This included damage to the private and public sectors as well as agriculture losses and insurance claims.